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CONTENTS

FEATURES

14

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL PREVIEW

Women's Hoops Looks To Take The Next Step

BY ROB HAVENS '88

16

MEN'S BASKETBALL PREVIEW

Aggies Have High Hopes for '24-'25 Season

BY ROB HAVENS '88

19

AGGIE SOCCER'S TAYLOR POUNDS Q&A

FIFTH-YEAR SENIOR WRAPS UP STELLAR CAREER

BY ROB HAVENS '88

22

FOOTBALL REWIND

Breakdown of our first six games & our favorite shots.

BY ROB HAVENS '88

29

TEXAS A&M SPORT CLUBS

AI spotlights Taekwondo & Sailing Clubs

BY ROB HAVENS '88

IN EVERY ISSUE

Publisher's Note	04
Snapshots	06
Scoreboard	12
The 12th Man	30

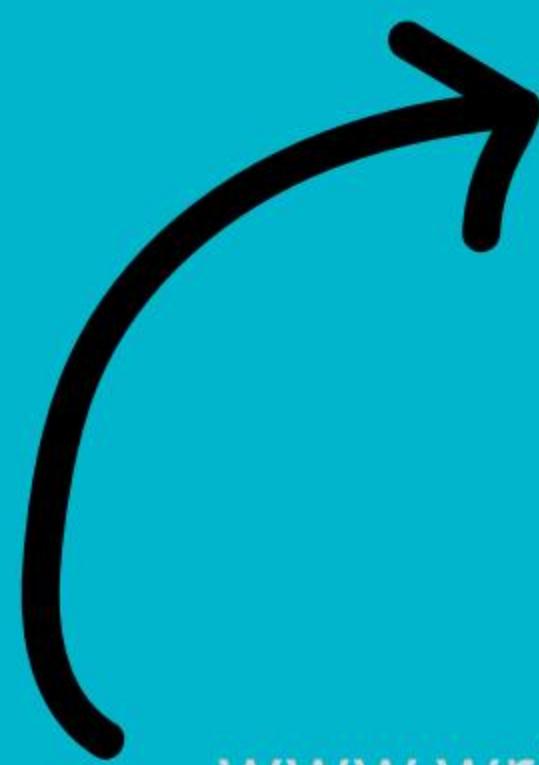
ON THE COVER: Bryan native and Purdue transfer Nic Scourton celebrates after a tackle for loss versus the No. 9 Missouri Tigers. Photo by Rob Havens '88





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Howdy Ags!

What an amazing start for first-year Coach Mike Elko! After a tough loss in game one, the team has rebounded for five straight wins, including the first SEC road win in three years. For the final time, the Aggies brought home the Southwest Classic trophy after downing Arkansas in a thrilling battle. The Maroon & White took care of business at Kyle Field the following week with a dominant win over No. 9 Missouri. This team has grown immensely over the first half of the season. The defense has taken on our head coach's identity and his success when he was our DC. The squad has learned to win tough games and to fight to the end. Conner Weigman suffered a shoulder injury in game one, but still gutted it out to lead the Aggies to a win in game two. Marcel Reed, who seems to be the future in Aggieland, came in and led the team to its first road victory and a huge win over the Hogs in Jerry World during a three-game winning streak. Weigman returned stronger and healthier and posted a 31-point victory over Missouri, the biggest margin over a top-ten team in program history. The victory boosted the Aggies ten spots in the AP poll to No. 15 in the country before the bye week. A raucous crowd at Kyle Field, motivated by the pregame trash talk of the Missouri quarterback, enjoyed a blowout victory on a bright sunny day in Aggieland. This team has definitely grown up under the direction of Mike Elko and is playing harder than ever. The future is bright in College Station.

Gig'em!

Rob '88





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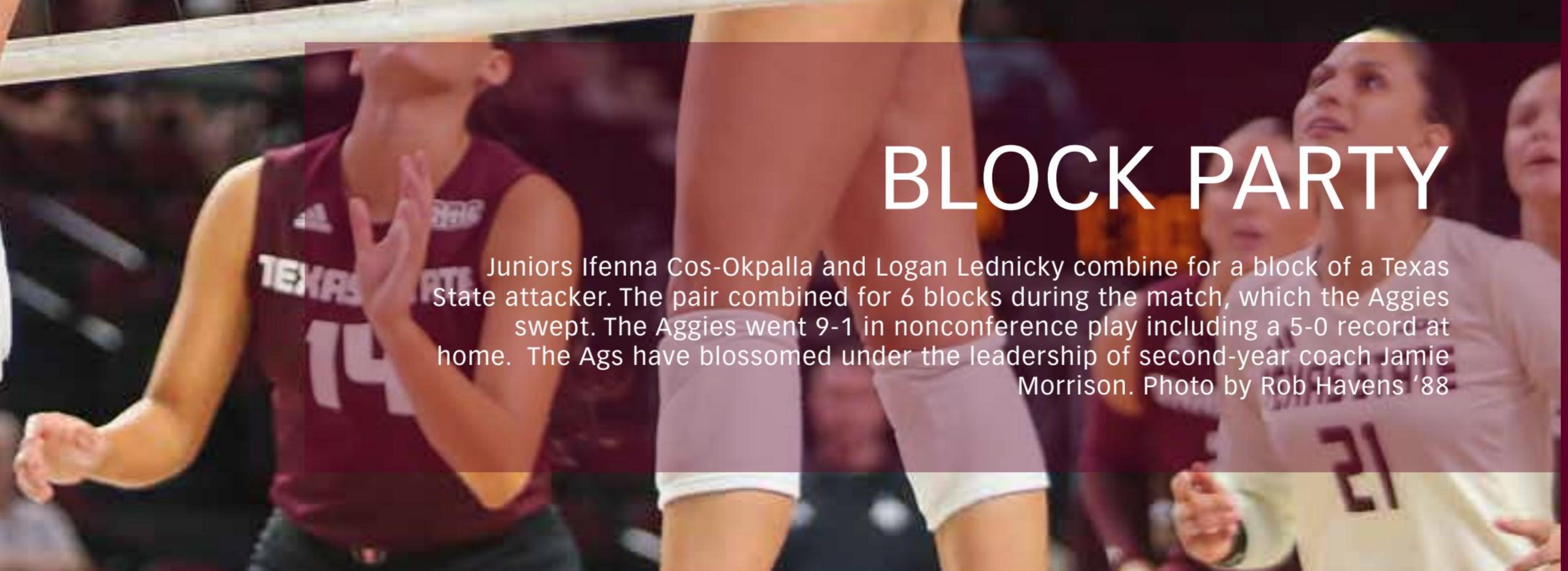


INSTANT IMPACT

Sophomore transfer defensive back Marcus Ratcliffe has made an instant impact since arriving on campus. The product out of Chula Vista, California had two tackles including this one vs. Notre Dame. In his first four games with the Aggies, he had three interceptions and a forced fumble and was the leading tackler against Florida.

Photo by Rob Havens '88





BLOCK PARTY

Juniors Ifenna Cos-Okpalla and Logan Lednicky combine for a block of a Texas State attacker. The pair combined for 6 blocks during the match, which the Aggies swept. The Aggies went 9-1 in nonconference play including a 5-0 record at home. The Ags have blossomed under the leadership of second-year coach Jamie Morrison. Photo by Rob Havens '88



RUNOUT

One of the best kept secrets during the offseason was that Coach Elko was bringing back "Power" as the run out song. The 12thMan joins together in one voice to welcome the team led by Nana Boadi-Owusy carrying the 12thMan flag! The iconic entrance is one of the best in college football! Photo by Rob Havens '88

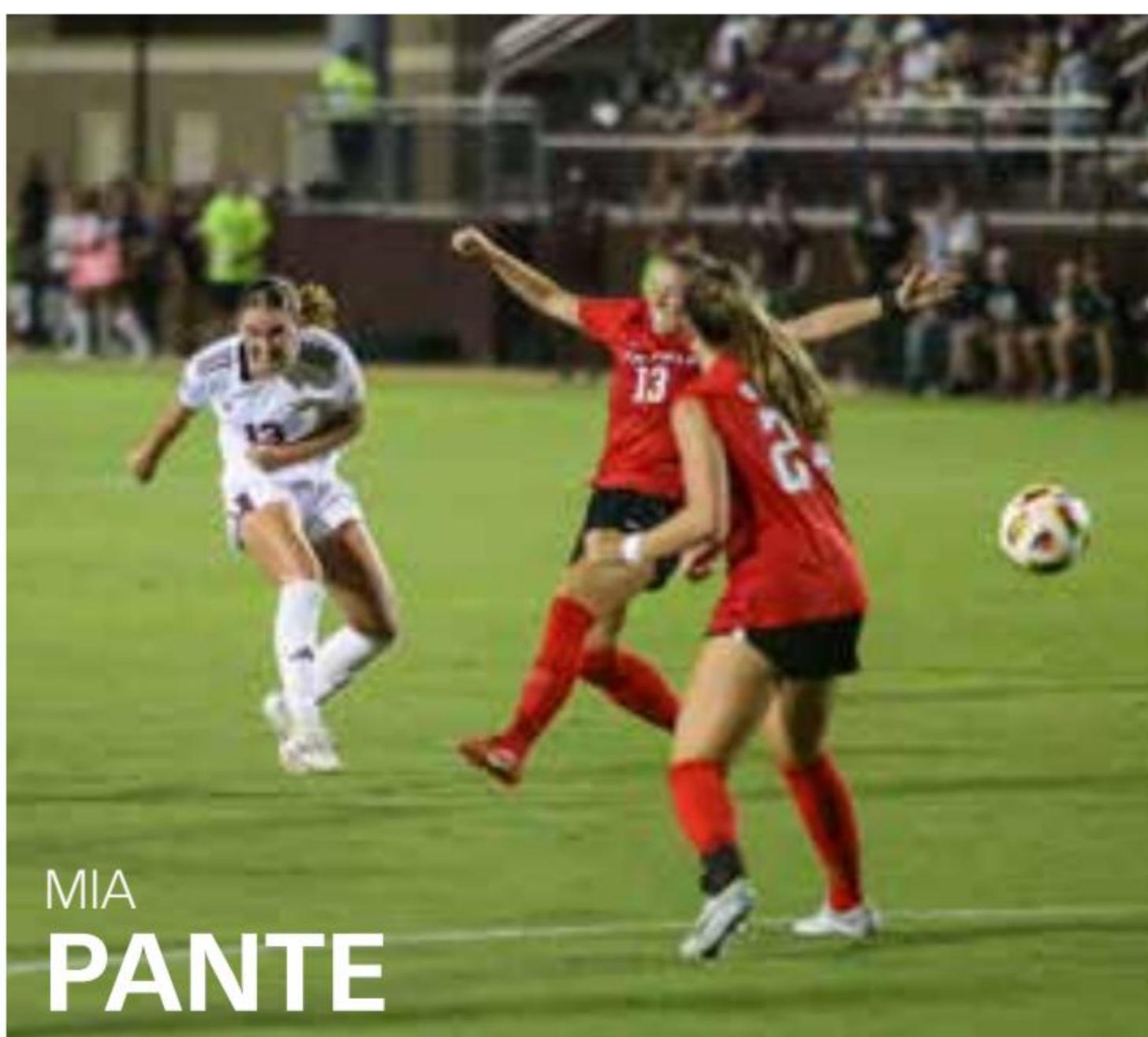


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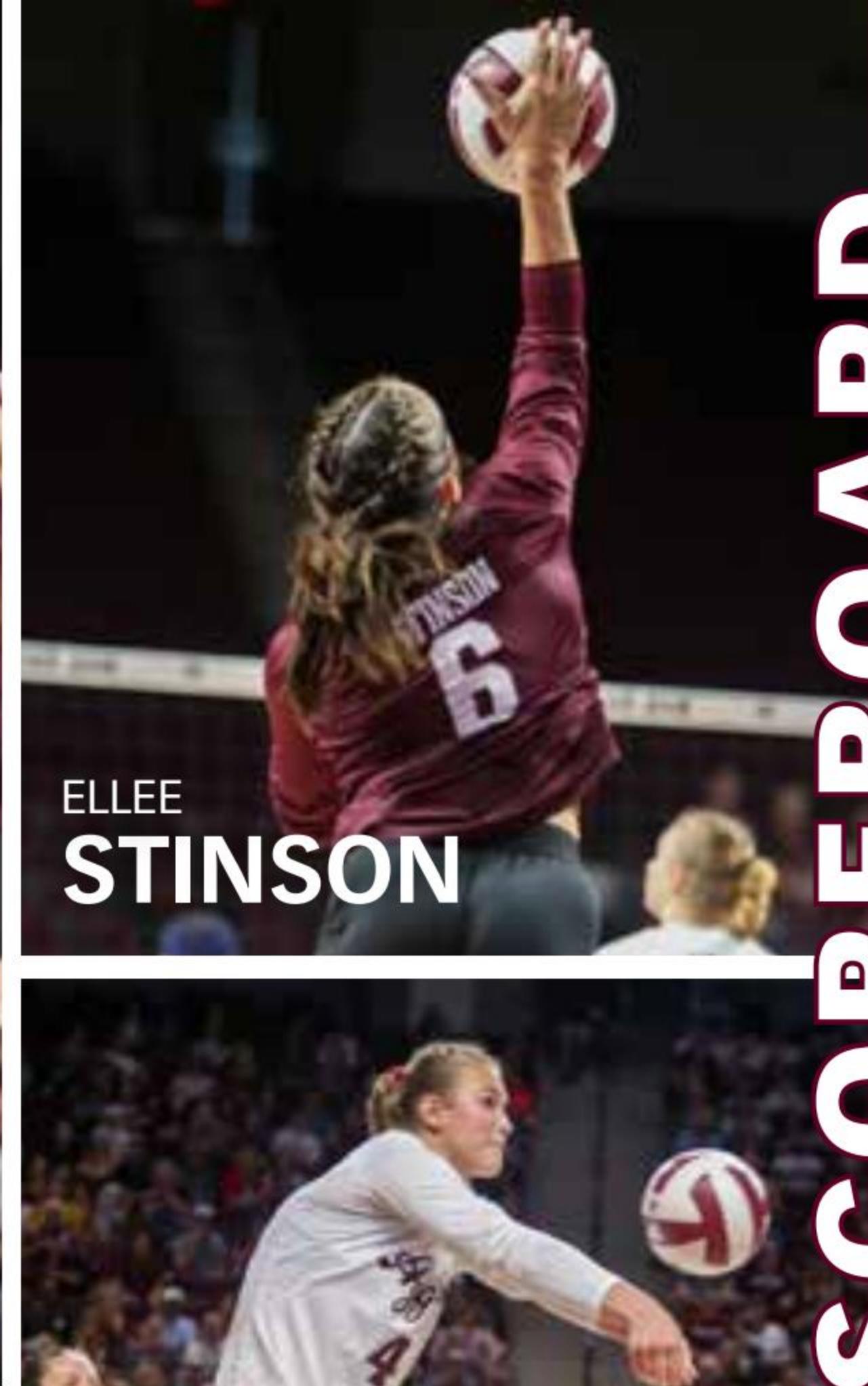
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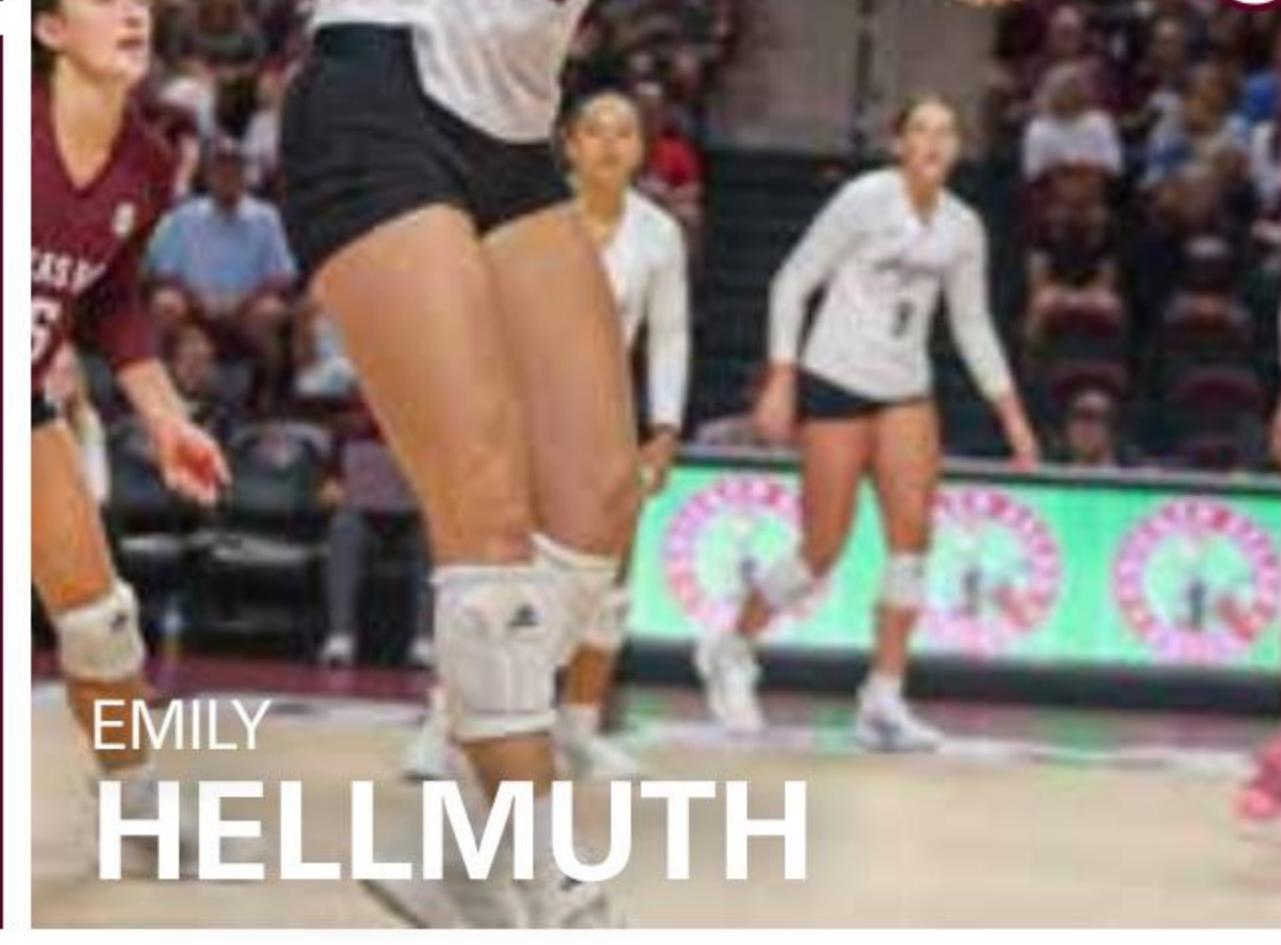
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Joni Taylor begins her third year at the helm of the Aggie women's basketball program fresh off a gold medal run that the USA National team earned in the Paris Olympics. Taylor was an assistant coach on the team that defeated France 67-66 to win the gold. She hopes to continue that momentum as the Aggies build on last year's success, where the team earned an invite to the Big Dance in only her second year on the job.

The SEC tied for the most teams from a single conference to garner tourney bids last season and this year Oklahoma and Texas, who both played in the NCAA tourney, will also participate.

The Aggies took a huge step last year, winning ten more games and making the tournament for the first time since the 2020-2021 campaign. The makeup of this year's squad will look different after Endyia Rogers wrapped up her collegiate career and Janiah Barker transferred to UCLA.

Taylor is excited to welcome back three starters from last year's team in Aicha Coulibaly, Lauren Ware and Sahara Jones. The three seniors return with a wealth of experience and talent and will be an integral part of the team's success.

Sahara Jones enters her fifth year with the Aggies. She was among only two players to play and start in all 32 games last year. She has been the model of consistency over her Aggie career. Last season she averaged 6.8 points a game and 5.3 rebounds.

Aicha Coulibaly begins her second year with the Aggies after three seasons at Auburn. She played and started all 32 games last year and led the team in points (13.6), steals (2.3), and minutes (29.7) per game. She scored a career-high 32 points against No. 1 S. Carolina in the SEC Tournament last year.

Redshirt senior Lauren Ware returns for her second season at A&M after transferring from Arizona where she played three years.

WOMEN'S HOOPS LOOKS TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP

BY ROB HAVENS '88



She started 30 games last year and had a team-high nine double-doubles. She averaged 9.1 points and 7.9 rebounds last year and had 1.7 blocks and 1.3 assists per game.

Coach Taylor brought in two players from the transfer portal in Amira Abdul-Rahim and Janae Kent. Abdul-Rahim spent the last three years at SMU after a year at Notre Dame. The 6'3 graduate transfer from Marietta, Georgia averaged 11.3 points a game last year for the Mustangs with 6.4 rebounds and 1.5 assists. She also led the AAC Conference with 50 blocked shots.

Kent comes to Aggieland from LSU, where she played in 32 games last year for Kim Mulkey. The 6'1 transfer from Oak Forest, Illinois was the all-time leading scorer for both men's and women's basketball at Oak Forest High School (2,063 career points).

Sophomore Sole Williams returns this year after playing in 28 games last season. She led all second-unit players with five points a game and averaged 12.9 minutes per contest.

Coach Taylor signed the No. 60 player in the nation and the No. 6 player in Texas in Taliyah Parker. The 6A All-State selection led her team to the 2024 UIL 6A State Championship at South Grand Prairie. She averaged 11 points, five rebounds, and four assists as a senior.

Vanessa Saidu comes back for her sophomore campaign after playing in 13 games last year as a true freshman. Also returning to the floor after redshirting last season are Erica Moon, Kendall Hunter and Jada Malone.

The SEC schedule will once again be a grind, but Taylor hopes that the returning talent, help from the portal and the momentum from last season will propel the Aggies to post-season play again. ■



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AGGIES HAVE

HIGH HOPES

FOR '24-'25 SEASON

BY ROB HAVENS '88



Expectations are high as the Aggies enter the '24-'25 season. Buzz Williams returns seven of his top eight players from last year's squad that won 21 games and advanced to the second round of the NCAA tournament. Boots Radford graduated and is pursuing a career in professional basketball while the rest of the talent from last year's team is ready to go further than they did last year.

Two-time first-team All-SEC pick Wade Taylor IV decided to "run it back" and the 12th Man couldn't be more excited. He has the talent to earn National Player of the Year and he's the only returning player in college basketball to log 500+ points, 100+ assists, and 60+ steals in each of the past two seasons.

Also returning is the "Dominican Dennis Rodman" Andersson Garcia, who pulled in 327 total rebounds last season, breaking a 42-year-old record by Claude "The Crockett Rocket" Riley from the '81-'82 season (317).

Former Duke transfer Henry Coleman III is ready to close out his collegiate career by leading the Aggies to the promised land one more time. He has 73 career starts and continues to be one of the leaders of this team.

Junior forward Solomon Washington "Solo" begins his third year with the Aggies and brings a freakishly athletic presence to the court. His high-energy play and dramatic blocks made him a crowd favorite the last two

years. In March of last season, he elevated his game, averaging almost 11 points, eight rebounds and two blocks per contest.

Another player who played his best at the end of the year was Manny Obaseki. The talented junior guard started the final 8 games and was instrumental in the Aggies' success down the stretch as he averaged 16.5 points a game with three rebounds. He also connected on 54.5% from the three-point line during that time.

Swingman Jace Carter comes into his senior campaign with hopes for a breakout season. In his first year with the Aggies, he got the starting nod 16 times and played in all 36 games. He averaged almost seven points a game with 4.7 rebounds.

Fifth-year senior Hayden Hefner will wrap up his Aggie career this season with hopes to return to the Big Dance one more time. The 6'6 185 pound guard is known for inciting the crowd with a trademark three-pointer. He started 18 games last year and logged career highs in minutes, field goals, 3-pointers, free throws, rebounds and assists.

Coach Williams also went into the portal to add talent to this year's squad. He brought in SMU's leading scorer from last year, Zhuric Phelps. The 6'5 guard out of Midland, TX played three years at SMU and averaged almost 15 points a game with four rebounds.

Buzz also signed the leading shot blocker from the



Minnesota Gophers, Pharrel Payne. The 6'9 255 pound forward played two seasons up north and averaged 10 points a game last year.

Rounding out the transfer class is a player we got a peek at last year when we played Nebraska in the NCAA tourney, C.J. Wilcher. He was the leading scorer off the bench for the Huskers, scoring almost eight points a game. The 6'5, 214-pounds guard out of New Jersey played three seasons in Lincoln after transferring from Xavier in 2021.

Williams also signed high school standouts Chris McDermott, Andre Mills, Janusz Ratowski and George Turkson Jr. McDermott is a 6'7 215 pounds forward who averaged almost a 20-20 every time he stepped on the floor. Mills is a four-star 6'4 shooting guard from Massachusetts. Ratowski is Buzz's first international freshman to sign at A&M. The 6'9 Polish forward averaged nearly 10 points and 10 rebounds last season. Turkson Jr. is a 6'7 forward who is also from Massachusetts. He is a consensus national top 100 prospect.

Buzz Williams enters his sixth season as the Aggies head coach. With the talent he has returning and the new additions, Aggie fans have plenty to be excited about. It's such a rarity in today's game to have so many experienced players return, and when the Aggies take the court this fall they should be able to hit the ground running! ■



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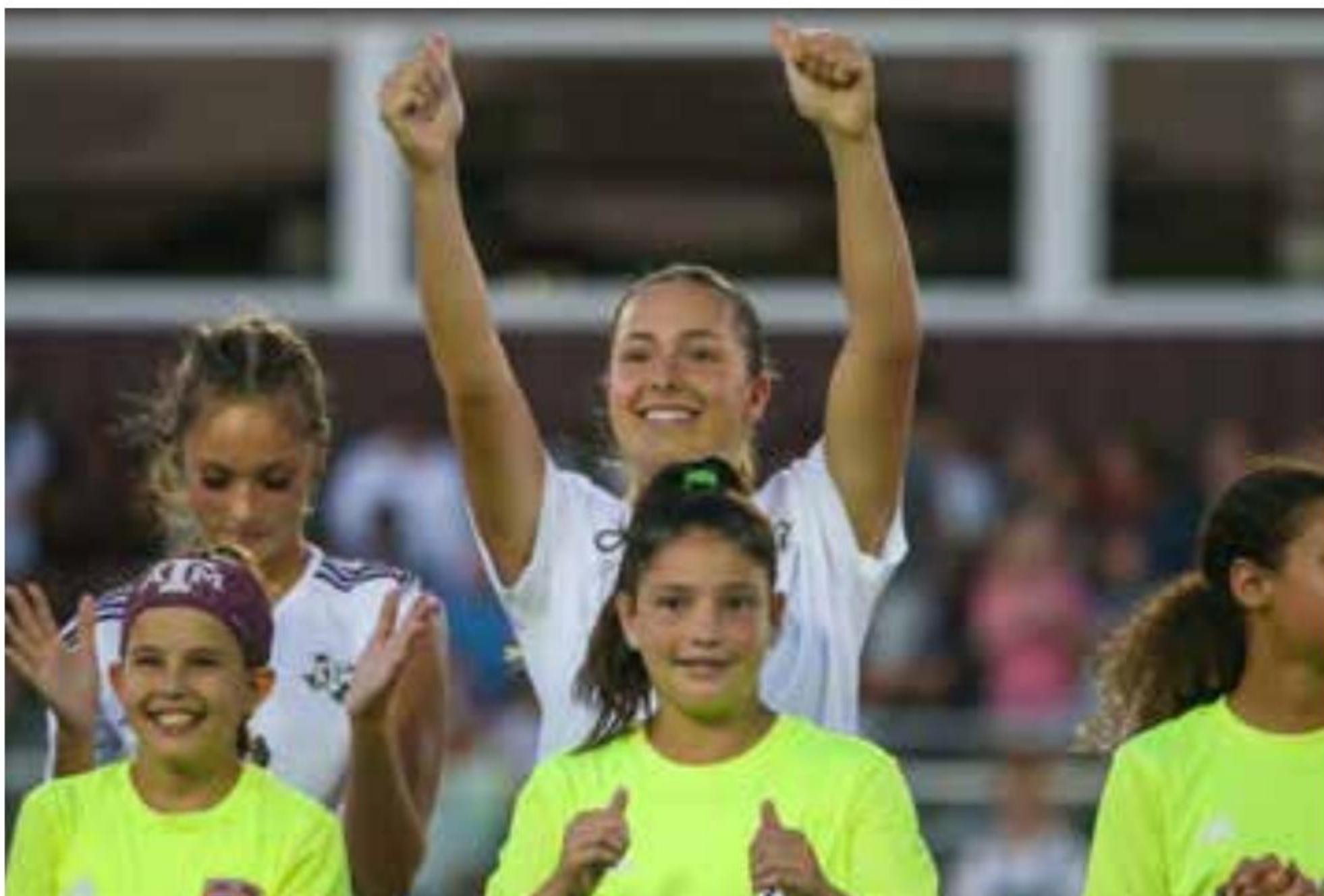
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Q&A

TAYLOR POUNDS



DID YOU PLAY OTHER SPORTS GROWING UP OR JUST SOCCER?

I grew up playing every sport. In middle school and high school, mainly high school, I narrowed it down to one. And soccer was the one that brought me the most joy. I liked the physicality aspect and the team part of it, so I stuck with it in high school. That ultimately led to me coming here.

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR RECRUITING PROCESS AND HOW YOU CHOSE TO COME TO TEXAS A&M.

I played for Challenge Soccer Club in the Houston area and recruiting started pretty early for me - like the end of middle school and the beginning of high school. I guess during the Texas Shootout we had a bunch of college coaches coming, and I would email coaches to come watch. I went on a few visits and ultimately A&M stood out to me the most. I loved the coaches, the culture, the traditions and it's not too far from home.

AT WHAT POINT DID YOU COMMIT?

I committed at the beginning of my sophomore year in high school.

DID YOUR SISTER HALEY POUNDS HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH YOUR DECISION TO COME HERE?

Yeah. I tried to keep an open mind. I know my sisters here and my dad went here so there's a lot of factors pulling me that way, but they made sure to comfort me by saying, "You don't have to come here!" (Laughs) "Keep your options open!" Haley definitely played a role though, because growing up I got to see her journey and how much she enjoyed it here and had the best four years ever. So I knew after coming on my visit, just experiencing it for myself, that I wanted to be a part of it.

AND YOUR BROTHER IS PLAYING GOLF AT A&M, CORRECT?

Yes, he is! The start of his sophomore year!

DID YOU HAVE A PART IN HIS COMING TO A&M?

Yeah, I think so! He was the same way! He grew up in an Aggie family, so a part of you holds to A&M. I think

he did the same thing. He went on a few visits but ultimately knew that A&M was the place to be. I told him, "You're gonna have the best time here. Like I love it! You'll meet some of the best people." I wanted him to experience that too! I think I played a little role in it! (Laughs).

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR JOURNEY AT A&M. THIS IS YOUR FIFTH YEAR. YOU SUFFERED AN INJURY DURING YOUR JUNIOR YEAR.

My freshman year was COVID year, and it was different and very difficult. I didn't get to have a normal college experience as a freshman, but we won the SEC West. It was awesome to be a part of that since all of us were just locked in on soccer and didn't have any outside distractions. We were able to make it far in the NCAA tournament that year also. In my sophomore year I think we made it to the second round of NCAA's. Junior year was in the spring. I had my foot injury and I had to get surgery and miss the end of the spring and fall, which I think honestly just grew my love for the sport. I just wanted to get out there with my team as soon as possible. So I did a lot of PT and leaned on my teammates throughout that time, and then my senior year I came back from my foot injury and was just super grateful and excited to be out there with my team again and give it all we had. Now I'm in my fifth year. I'm getting my master's and I'm able to play, which is a big blessing. I'm just trying to soak it in and enjoy every last moment that I have with my teammates and ultimately win a national championship this year, so hopefully we get that done!

YOU SCORED A COUPLE OF GOALS THE OTHER DAY AGAINST LOUISIANA TECH, TELL ME ABOUT THAT EXPERIENCE.

Yeah, that was awesome. I think, for me, one of my goals this year was to score more. I think during that game it was 0-0, and something needed to happen. I just needed to go forward and see what could happen, and on that cross that Macy

had I was able to head it in. It was such a great ball by Macy, but that was just exciting for me and gave our team more momentum moving forward. I think less than a minute later I scored another one, which was another great ball by Georgia behind their back line for me to just tap it in. But I think I just had this mindset - just get up there and see what you can do (laughs). Because I kind of ran out of position. I think LA Tech wrote an article and they thought I was a forward, so that was kind of nice. (Laughs). But I gained more confidence during that game to go forward and help our team with overall morale. It gave us more confidence moving forward.

WAS THAT THE FIRST TIME TO HAVE 2 GOALS IN A GAME IN COLLEGE?

Yeah, It was! It was exciting.

WHAT ARE YOU STUDYING AND WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO AFTER A&M?

I'm in the Mays Business School as an accounting major in the PPA program. It's like a five-year program to earn your master's. I'm getting my masters in Entrepreneurship. I recently signed a job offer for Deloitte in Houston. Next spring I'll be studying for my CPA exams and will finish those before starting to work full time.

WHAT ARE SOME THINGS NOT IN SOCCER THAT YOU'LL REMEMBER FOR YEARS?

There are some student-athlete conferences with donors where we would go. I remember one year we went to the J.W. Marriott and it was just really cool to be able to form connections with the donors and hang out in a more casual setting and get to know athletes from other sports. And football games with my teammates. It's always fun, because during the season we don't have a lot of time to do anything else besides practice and stuff. So when we do get those weekends to go to football games - those have been the best memories.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE AGGIE TRADITION?

Probably the Aggie Ring.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE MOMENT ON THE SOCCER FIELD?

Probably when I scored the goal against Alabama in order to put us into first place in the division.

HOW'S IT BEEN PLAYING FOR COACH G?

I love it. I feel like G and Phil try to form a personal relationship with you outside of soccer too, which I think is super rare and special because they really get to know you. They are both great at developing their players and wanting the best for each girl.

WITH YOUR CAREER WINDING DOWN ARE YOU LOOKING AT WHAT IT WILL BE LIKE TO NOT PLAY SOCCER ANYMORE?

Yeah, I'm obviously sad, but I'm just trying to soak in every last moment and just really enjoy it, because I knew it was going to come to an end at some point. I just want to soak in every last moment with my team and give everything I have in the field. ■





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2024 FOOTBALL REWIND



GAME 1



NOTRE DAME 23 - TEXAS A&M 13

Although the Aggies fell late to the Irish after the teams were tied with less than two minutes to play, there was still plenty to cheer about for the fourth-largest crowd in Kyle Field history (107,315). It was the first game of the Mike Elko era. The team ran out onto the field to "Power", which sent the stadium into a frenzy. The offense took advantage of the energy and cruised down the field in their first drive but had to settle for a Randy Bond 34-yard field goal. The Aggie defense was exceptional for three quarters, holding Notre Dame to only six points at the half. Conner Weigman returned for his first game since suffering a foot injury last year and completed 12 of 30 passes for 100 yards with two interceptions. Under the direction of Collin Klein, the Aggies rushed for 146 yards on the day. The best drive of the game came in the fourth as the Aggies used 10 plays to go 65 yards and Le'Veon Moss forced his way into the end zone from one yard out to tie the game at 13. The Irish went 85 yards and scored with 1:54 to take the lead and added a late field goal to win 23-13.



GAME 2



TEXAS A&M 52 - MCNEESE 10

Texas A&M dominated the Cowboys on both sides of the ball in Elko's first victory, generating a 38-0 lead at the half and allowing 85 Aggies to take the field and get some well-deserved playing time. Conner Weigman was stellar, completing 11 of 14 passes with two touchdowns and showing off his legs before exiting the game in the second quarter. The Aggies also got the ground game going, as Le'Veon Moss ran for 84 yards and two touchdowns while Amari Daniels added 75 yards of his own with two scores. Moose Muhammad III and Noah Thomas both found pay dirt on passes from Weigman as the two talented veterans jump-started the Aggie passing game. Newcomer Cyrus Allen led all receivers with five catches for 72 yards. The most exciting play of the day came from true freshman Terry Bussey, who went around the end and outraced everyone for a 65-yard touchdown in the second half. The Aggies dominated on defense with Jordan Lockhart leading the way with six tackles. Marcus Ratcliffe and Will Lee III picked up game-changing interceptions in the first half.





GAME 3



TEXAS A&M 33 - FLORIDA 20

Not even a lightning delay could stop the Aggies as they dominated the Gators on both sides of the ball to win their first road game in three years. Elko made a game-time decision to start redshirt freshman Marcel Reed after the news broke that Weigman was suffering from a shoulder injury and would be questionable to play. Reed responded with a stellar performance, completing 11 of 17 pass attempts for 178 yards and two touchdowns. He also showed his athleticism by adding another 84 yards on the ground and a rushing TD. The trio of Moss, Daniels and Smith showcased their abilities as the Aggies rushed for 310 yards during the contest, dominating the line of scrimmage. The Aggies had two scoring drives of over 90 yards during the contest (92, 99). Nine different players caught passes, and Theo Melin Öhrstöm and Cyrus Allen posted the first touchdown catches of their Aggie careers. The defense was outstanding, holding the Gators to only 52 yards on the ground. Bryce Anderson secured the win with a pick-six in the third quarter.

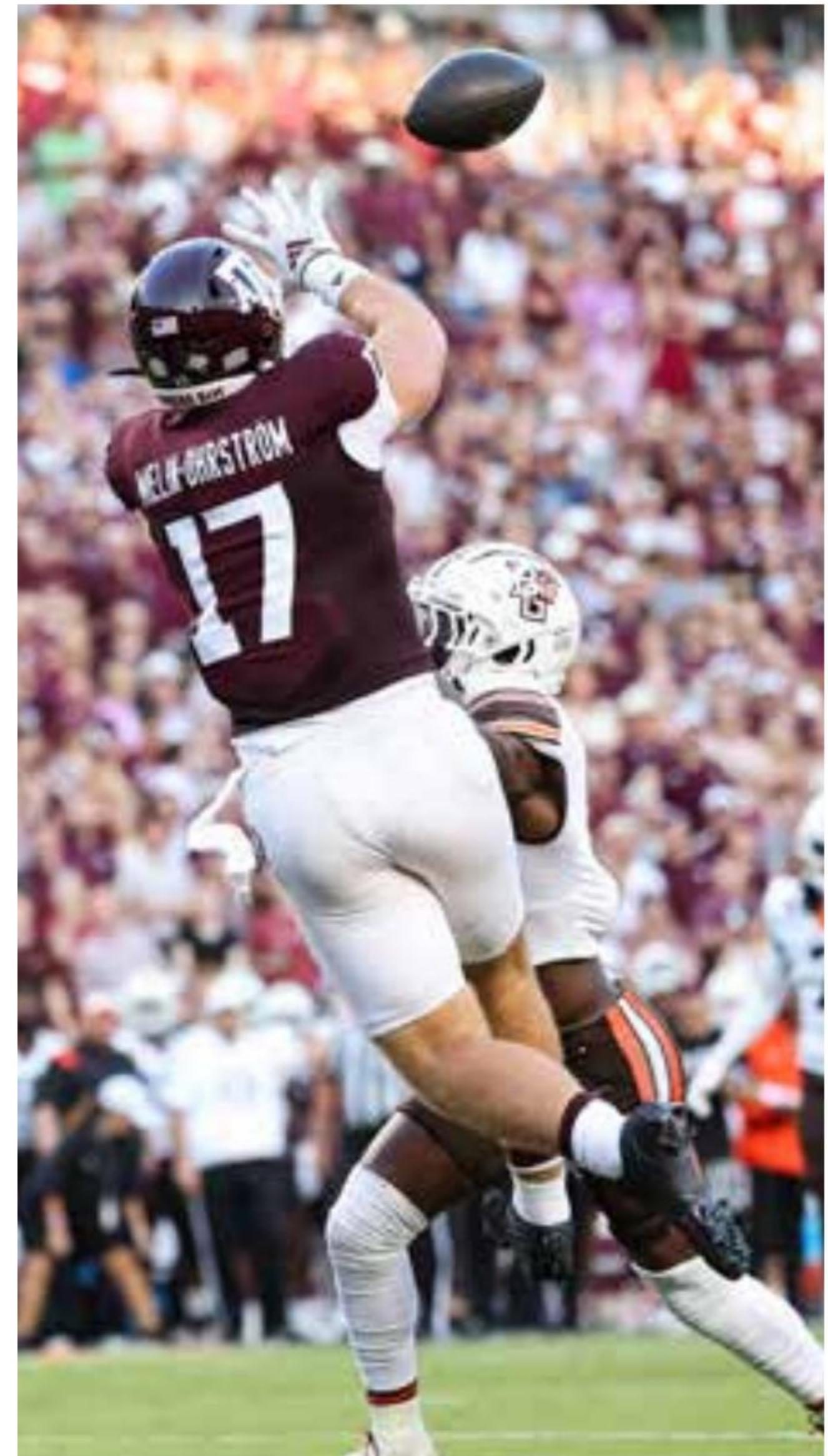


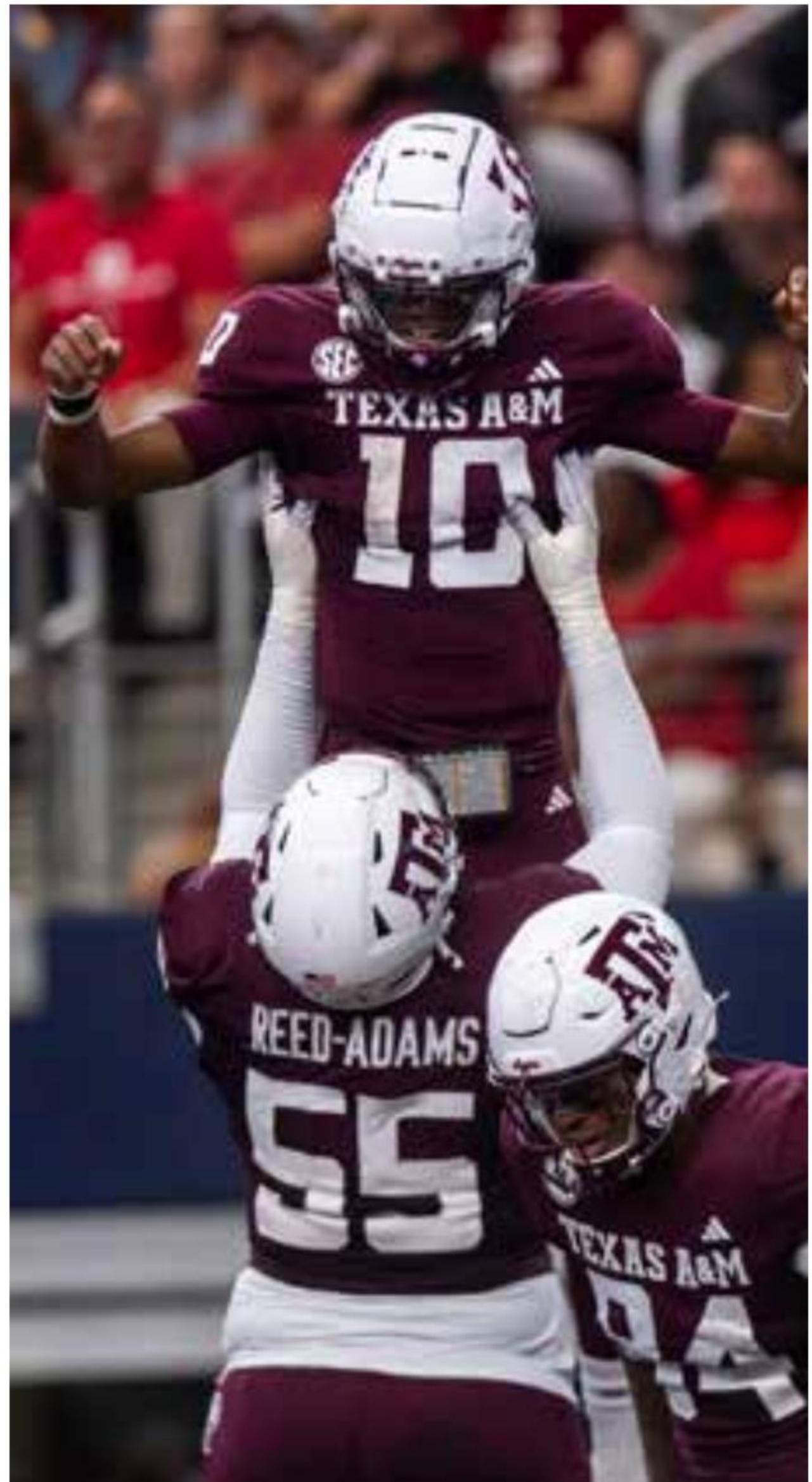
GAME 4



TEXAS A&M 26 - BOWLING GREEN 20

On a night when the Aggies didn't play their best, Coach Elko was still pleased with his team's fight as they did what they had to do to win the game. Bowling Green had already shown that they were a tough team to beat, as they narrowly lost at Penn St 34-27 earlier this year. Marcel Reed got the start for the Aggies again and opened the game with an 11-play 75-yard drive that ended with a 27-yard touchdown pass to Theo Melin Öhrström. The Ags would add two field goals and allow one as the teams left the field at the half, 13-3. Sixth-year quarterback Connor Bazelak found future NFL tight end Harold Fannin Jr for a 65-yard touchdown to open the second half and the Aggies were in a dogfight. They would respond with an 8-play 75-yard drive that resulted in a touchdown pass to Jahdae Walker to give the Aggies a 20-10 lead. The Falcons would add another touchdown and Randy Bond would make his third and fourth field goals to extend the lead to nine. The Aggie D would bend but not break, and Marcus Ratcliffe got an interception in the end zone that kept the Hawks from scoring a late touchdown. A field goal after an Aggie fumble allowed the Hawks to draw the game within six, but a failed onside kick ended the game.





GAME 5



TEXAS A&M 21 - ARKANSAS 17

Texas A&M brought the Southwest Classic trophy home for the last time as the Aggies beat the Hogs for the 12th time in the previous 13 games. Arkansas hit a home run on their third offensive play, a 75-yard touchdown completion. The Aggies responded on their second drive as Noah Thomas had a catch and run score for 58 yards to tie the contest at seven. It appeared the Aggies were in control on the Hogs 4th and 15, but the punter ran up the middle easily for a first down and Arkansas was up 14-7. Shemar Stewart would make a huge defensive play, blowing up a zone read and causing a fumble deep in enemy territory, and Marcel Reed would tie the score at 14 with a keeper up the middle. The teams remained deadlocked into the fourth before Arky would take the lead on a 45-yard field goal. Needing a game-winning drive, the Aggies marched down the field thanks in large part to Le'Veon Moss who punished the Hog defense. Reed found Tre Watson for a five-yard touchdown that would wind up being the game-winner. Nic Scourton would have a strip sack and Jaydon Hill would recover the fumble to clinch the victory. Jerry Jones presented the championship trophy to Coach Elko for the final time.



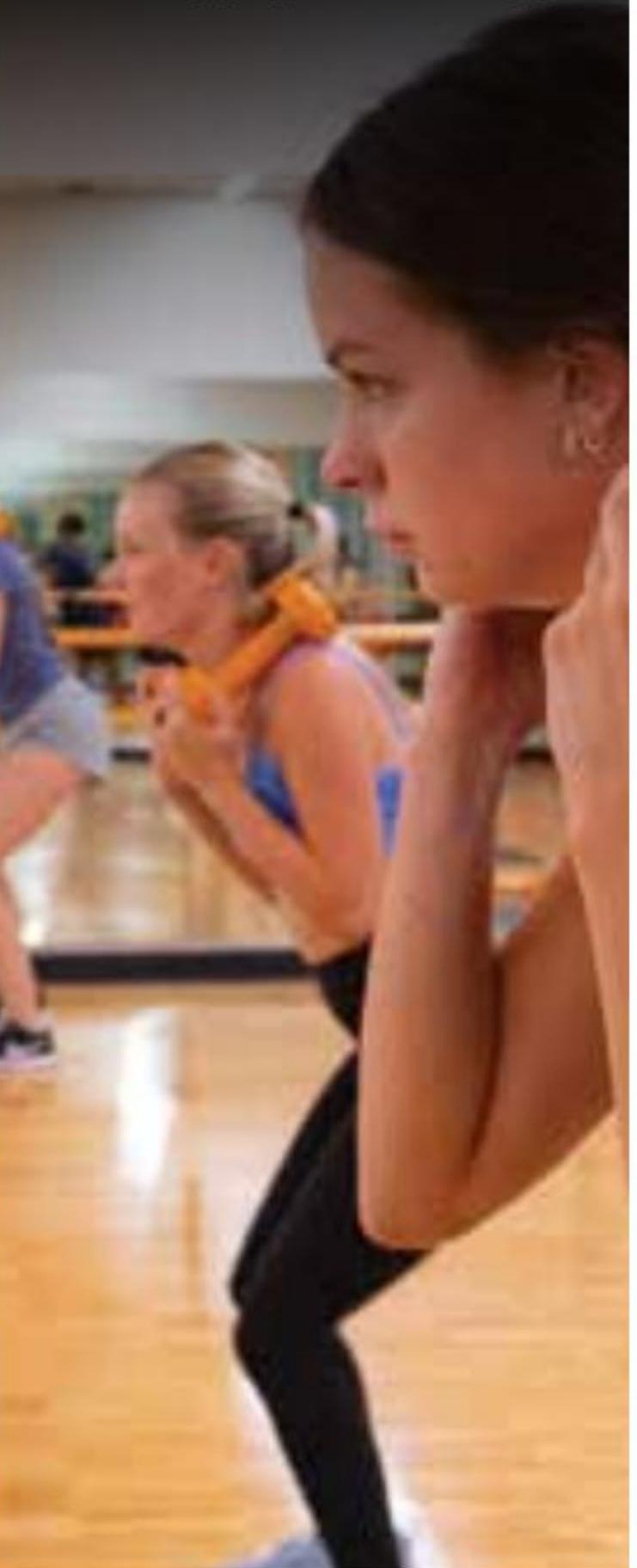
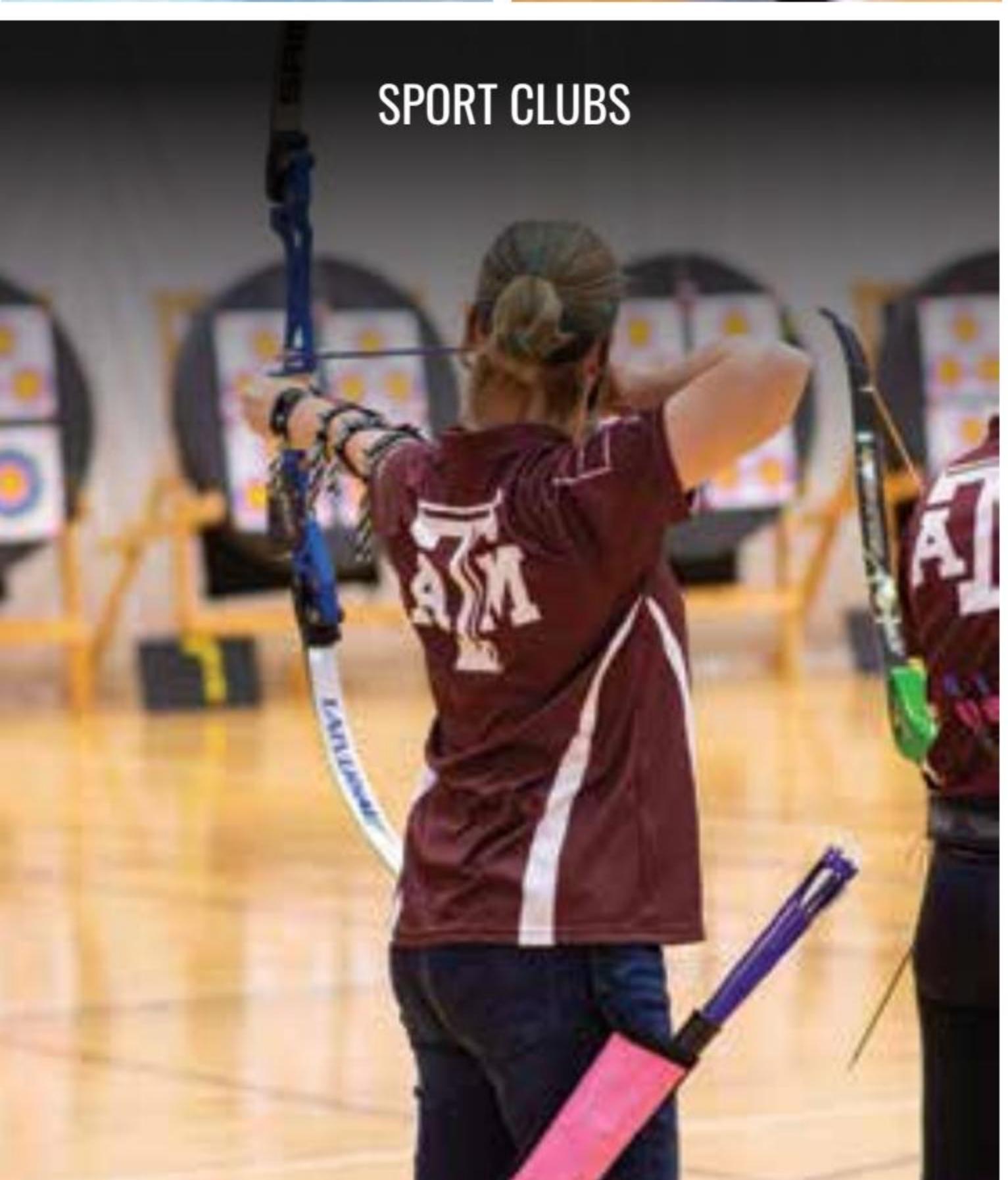
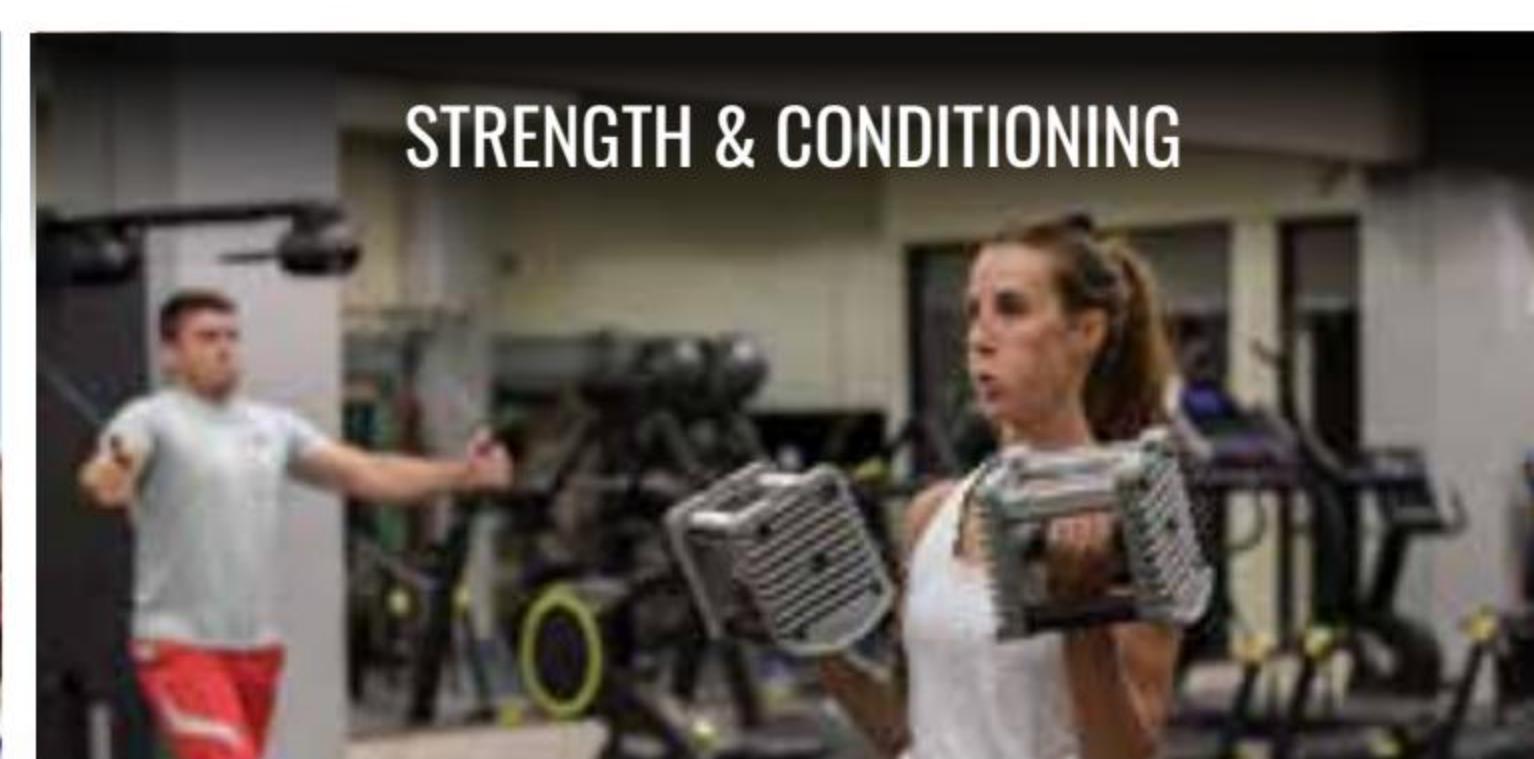
GAME 6



TEXAS A&M 41 - MISSOURI 10

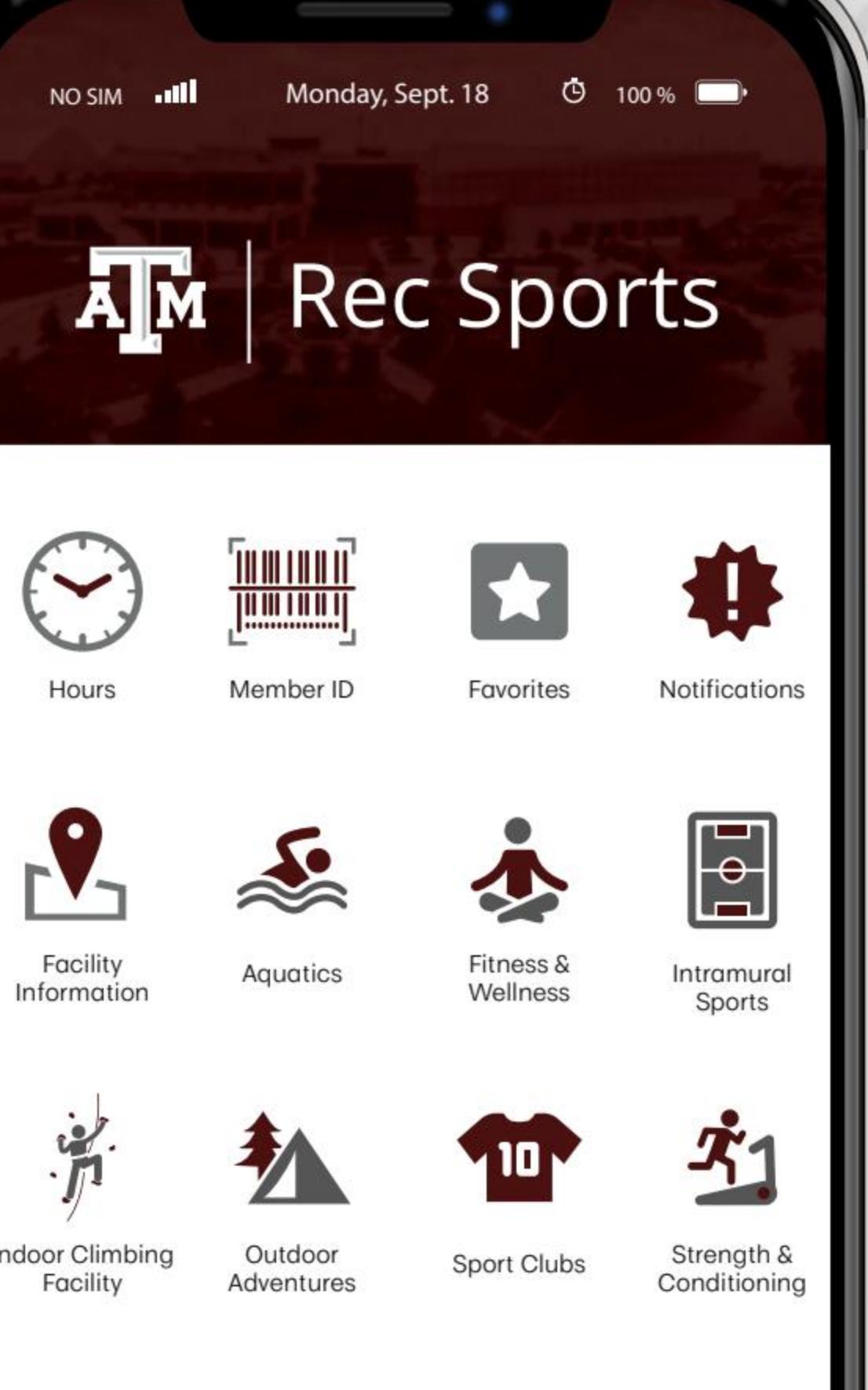
He's Back! After missing three games due to a shoulder injury, Conner Weigman returned and he did not disappoint, going 18-22 for 276 yards. The talented sophomore led the Aggies up and down the field in a dominating performance over the No. 9 team in the nation before a raucous crowd. Weigman spread the ball around and completed passes to ten different receivers. True freshman Terry Bussey led the group with three catches for 76 yards. The offensive line also dominated as the Aggies rushed for 236 yards against the No. 2 defense in the country. Le'Veon Moss led the rushing attack with 138 yards, including a 75-yard scamper up the middle to open the second half. He had three rushing touchdowns during the game. Amari Daniels had two as well including a 25-yard run that set up a short one-yard touchdown in the opening stanza. The Aggies dominated on defense, holding the Tigers to only 254 yards on offense. Not to be left out, Tyler White nailed a coffin corner punt at the end of the first half at the half-yard line.



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Rec Sports

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

TAEKWONDO CLUB

BY ROB HAVENS '88

Taekwondo, a Korean martial art and combat sport, focuses on kicking and punching techniques. The Taekwondo Club at Texas A&M has been around for more than 50 years.

In competitions, two participants attempt to score the most points in a round. The victor is the one who wins the best of three rounds. A successfully landed punch is worth one point. A kick to the opponent's chest guard earns two points, and a head kick is worth three points. If a spin is added to the kick, two additional points are awarded.

Tournaments typically use a bracket system to determine first, second, and third place. However, some tournaments use a round-robin format, which allows everyone to compete against each other.

The Texas A&M Taekwondo Club currently has 40 members with varying experience levels. Many members joined with prior Taekwondo experience, while others came from different martial arts background or with no experience at all.

Club president Kevin Von Nacher said, "I joined the Taekwondo club to get back into Taekwondo and be able to compete at a high level again."

The Aggies' main rival is the University of Texas, and the two schools regularly compete throughout the year. However, Von Nacher admits when the Longhorns compete against schools from other states, the Aggies put their rivalry aside and cheer for their fellow state school.

The team practices four times a week, with one session designed for beginners and another focused on conditioning. When asked what makes a great member, Von Nacher said "Someone who encourages their teammates and



is always there for them, as well as someone who is consistently showing up and puts in all their effort."

The team had a successful season last year at collegiates, with four members winning gold medals and four earning bronze. After competing, they celebrated with a feast together in Chinatown in San Francisco.

If you're looking to learn a new skill, meet new friends, and represent Texas A&M, be sure and check out the Taekwondo Club.



SAILING CLUB

BY ROB HAVENS '88

If you aren't familiar with terms like "jib," "tack," or "regatta," the Sailing Club at Texas A&M Rec Sports is a great place to start. Founded in the 1990s, the club has approximately 55 members. About 15 members are on the racing team, while the remaining 40 are on the club's practice squad.

The club competes in two types of competitions. In the fall, members take part in fleet racing, which involves two sailors in a 420 boat racing against other teams in a fleet of up to 20 or more boats.

In the spring, the members compete in team racing, a format where three sailors in one boat compete against another team in a round-robin event.

For readers unfamiliar with sailing terms: a jib is the sail located at the front

of the boat. Tacking refers to changing the boat's course by turning its head into and through the wind, and regattas are sporting events made up of a series of boat races.

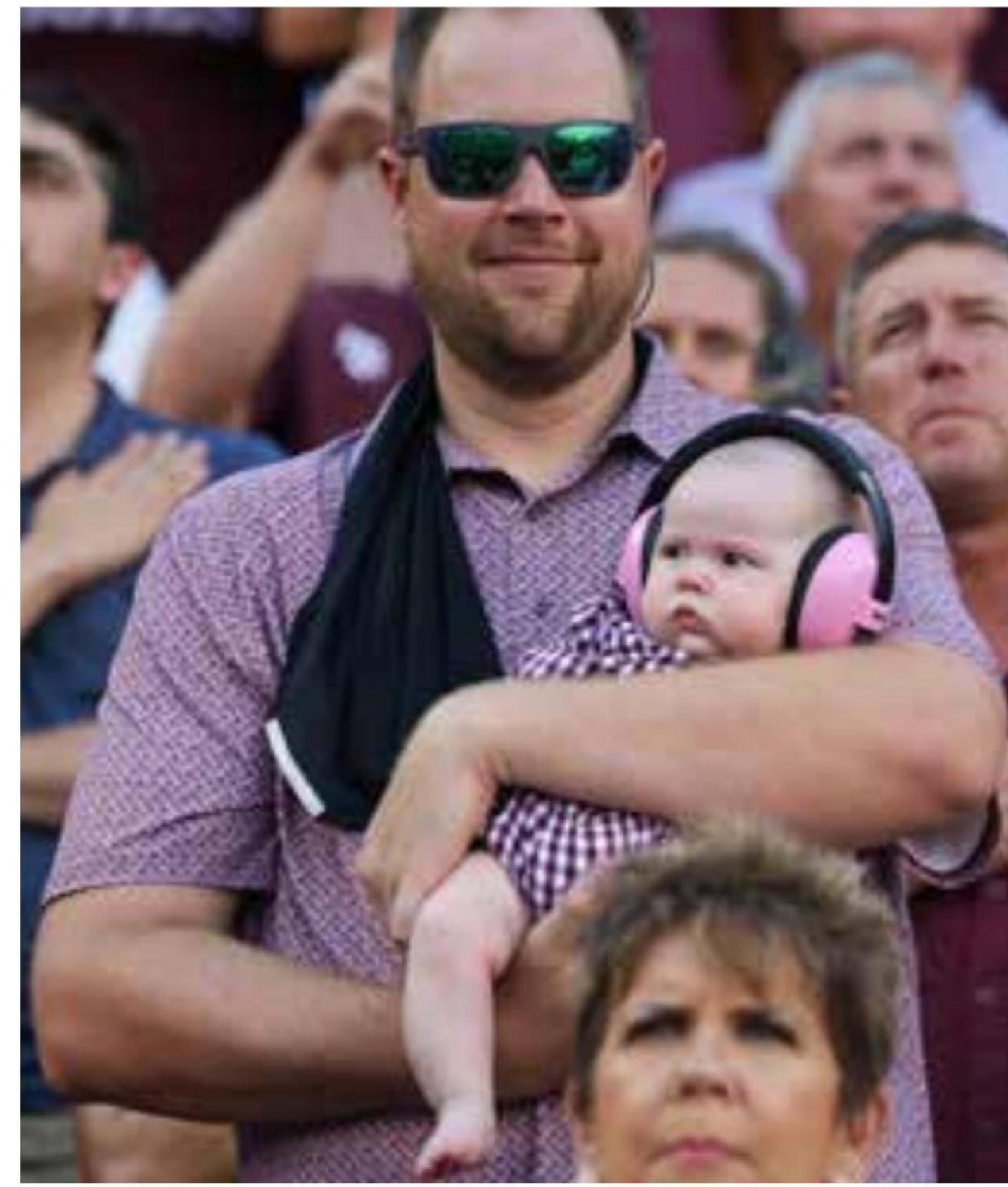
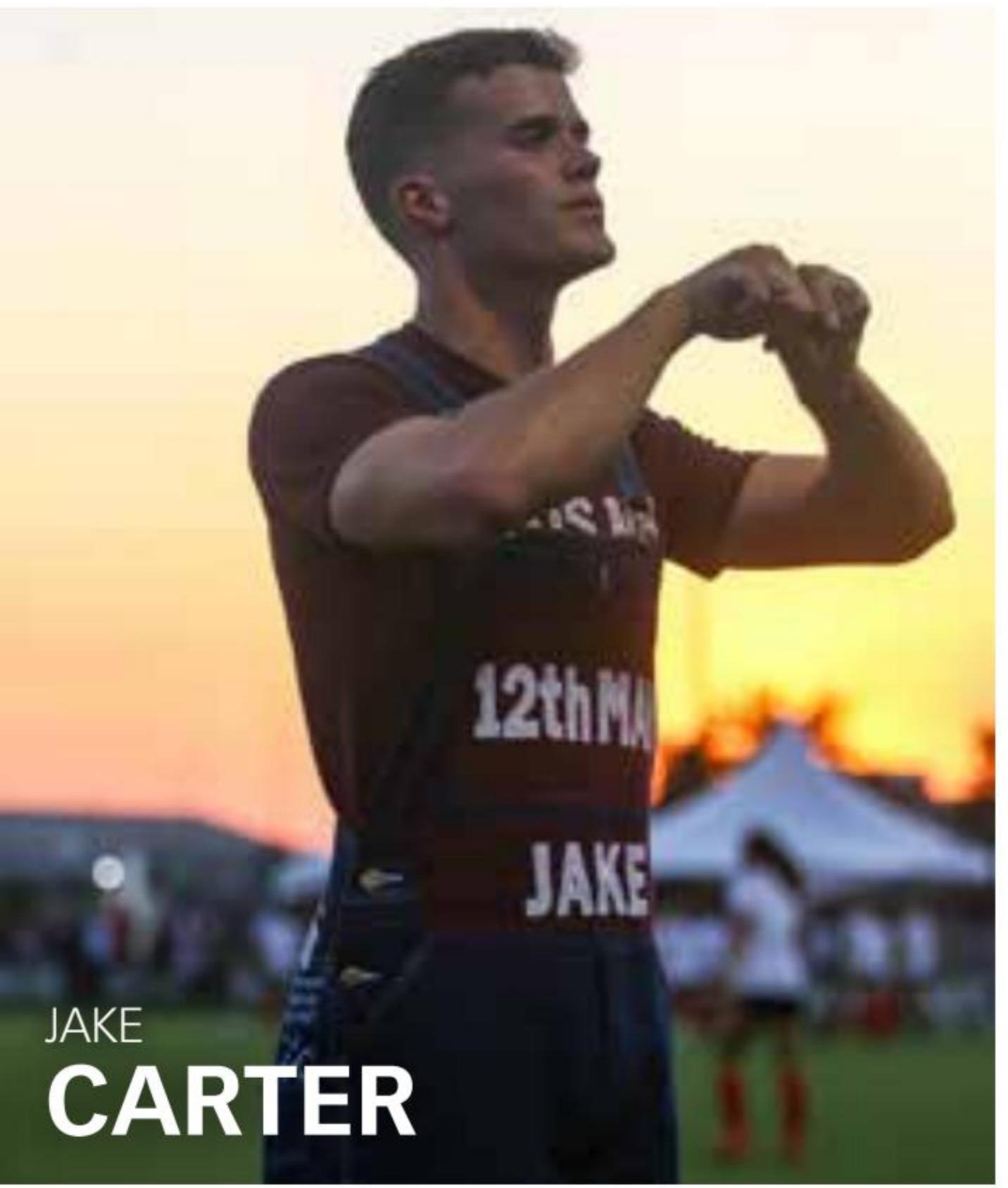
We asked club president Ryan Ingram why members typically join the club. "There are a couple of different reasons that members join," Ingram said. "Some join to try something new, get outdoors, or pick up an old skill. Others join to continue competing at a high level."

Texas A&M's main opponents are the University of Texas, Texas A&M Galveston, Texas A&M Corpus Christi, and Tulane. The race team practices from 4 to 7 p.m. every Wednesday, and the club team practices on Fridays. Last spring, the A team had an outstanding season, placing first or

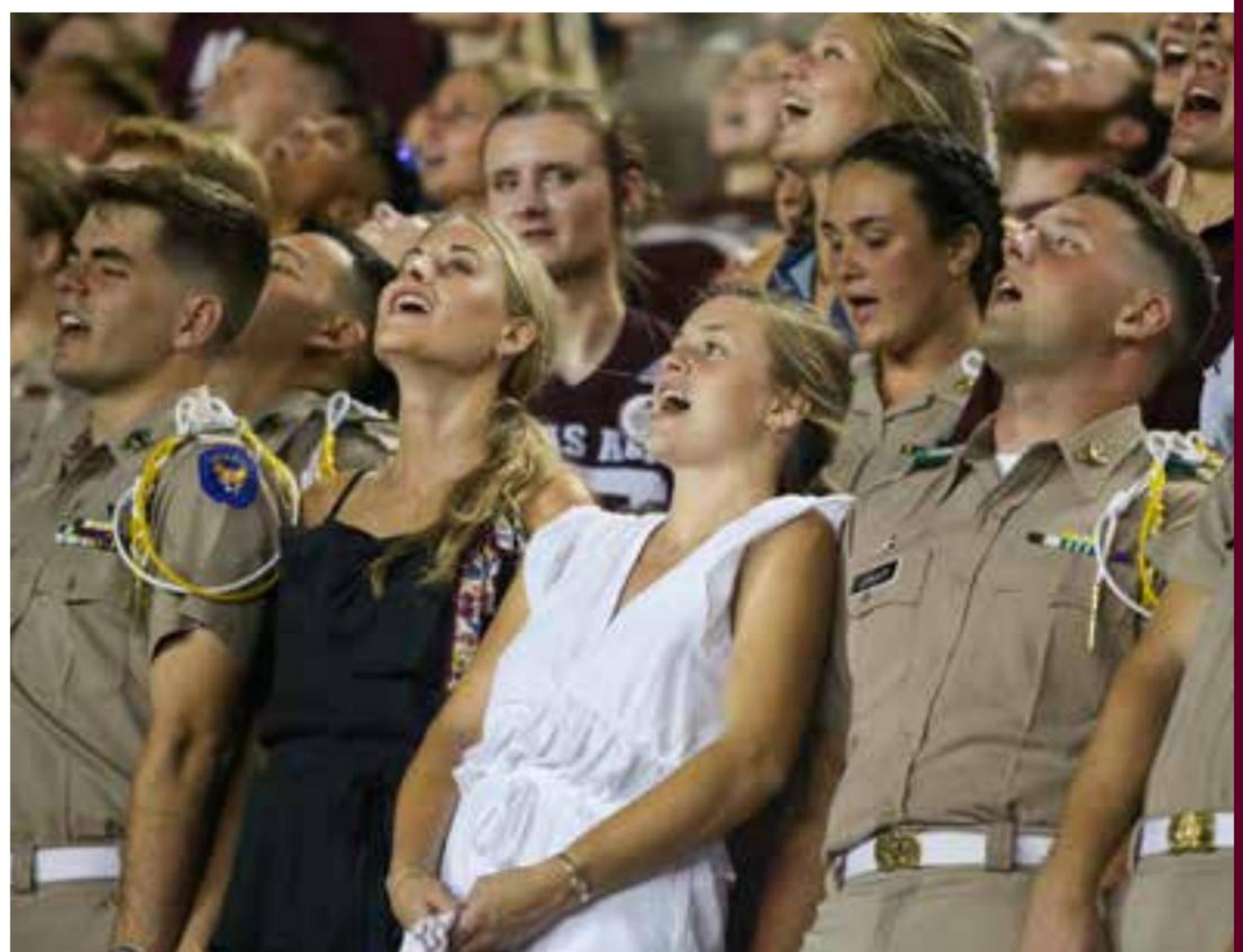
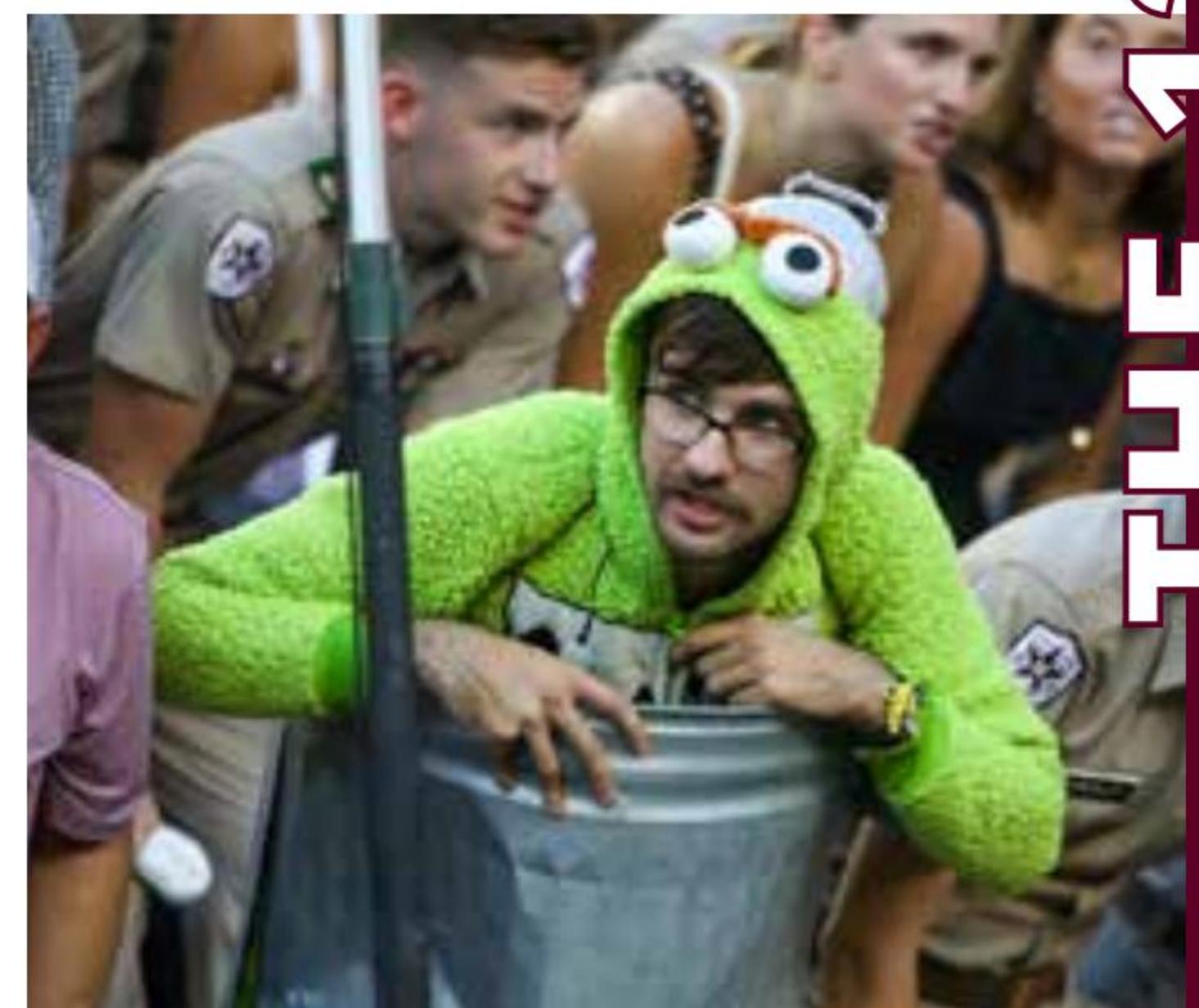
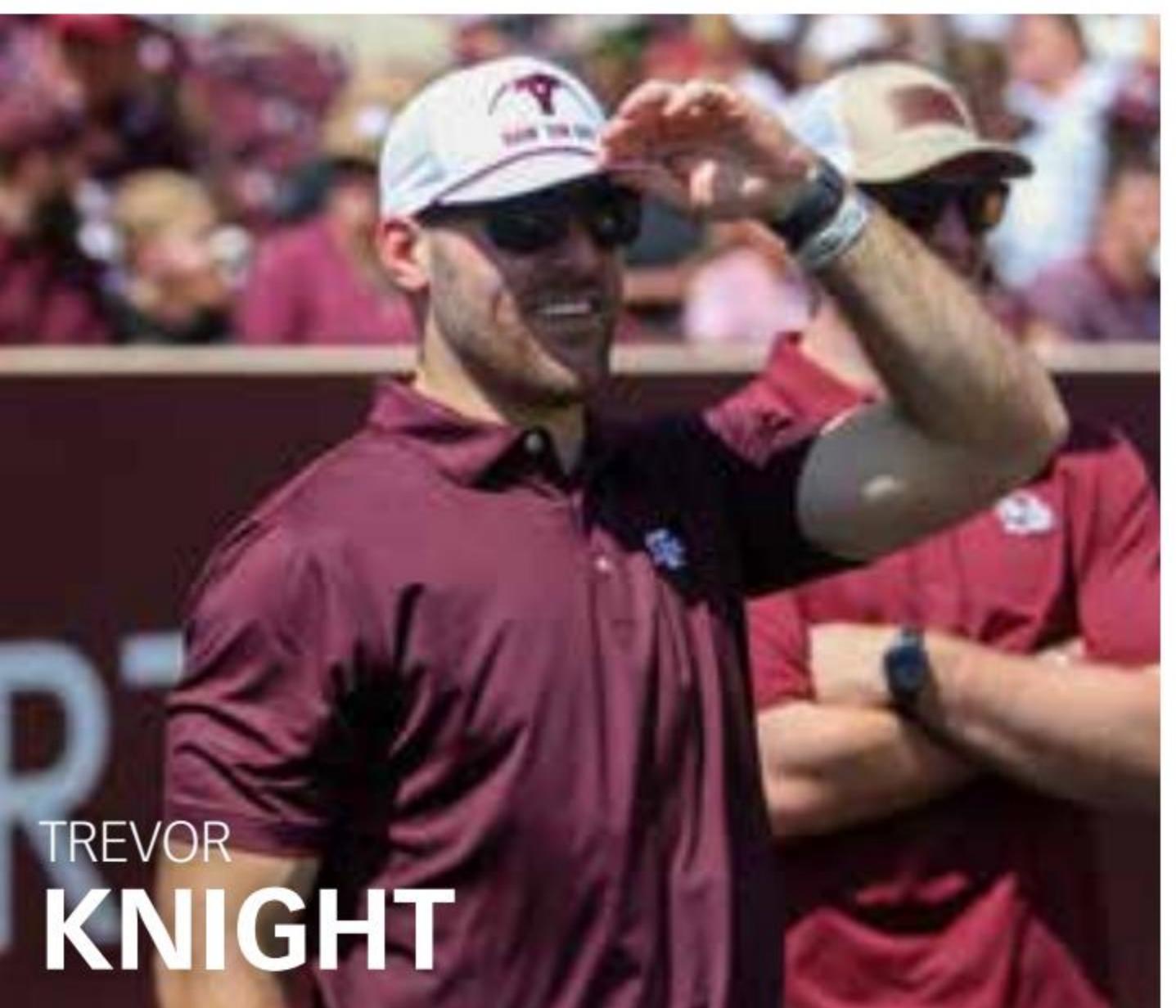
second in five events.

We asked about his favorite experience was since joining the club, Ingram said "Sailing up in Maine at Bowden College, we sailed hard in high winds, cold, and rain on Saturday. Race was canceled on Sunday, so we hung out in Portland and went home and boiled lobsters."

Competing for the school you love is always a common theme among club members, but camaraderie is always the thing they bring up the most. Ingram explained, "Getting to hang out with some of my best mates, especially at our team events, and in car and plane trips, you learn so much about people when you throw five 20-year-olds in a car or plane together!"



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